

REMARKS

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks responsive to the Office Action dated May 21, 2004, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of this Application.

Applicant has herein cancelled claims 2 and amended claims 1 and 3 as shown above. Claims 1 and 3-20 are pending in this application.

Applicant respectfully thanks the Office for the indication that claims 17-20 are allowable and that claims 2-4, 8-9, and 11-15 are merely objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if revised to independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicant has cancelled claim 2 and incorporated its limitations into claim 1. Accordingly, in accordance with the Office Action, claim 1 is now in allowable form. Claims 3-9 depend from claim 1, and, therefore, also are allowable at this time.

The Office rejected claims 10 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Cromer. The Office further rejected claims 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Brederveld in view of Cromer.

The rejection of claims 5 and 6 is moot in view of the fact that they depend from amended claim 1, which now incorporates the limitations of former claim 2, which has been deemed allowable.

With respect to claims 10 and 16, Applicant traverses the rejection as Cromer is not prior art to the present invention under 35 U.S.C. §102(e). Particularly, the effective filing date of Cromer is February 1, 2002, whereas the effective filing date of the present application is February 15, 2002. However, as set forth in the declaration submitted

herewith, the invention was made prior to February 1, 2002. Accordingly, Cromer is not prior art under the statute.

Accordingly, claims 10 and 16 distinguish over the prior art of record. All other claims that have not already been discussed depend from claim 10 and/or 16 and, therefore, also are allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is now in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to issue a Notice of Allowance at the earliest possible date. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned counsel by telephone call in order to further the prosecution of this case in any way.

Respectfully submitted,

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